

# Local Music in Cultural Heritage Institutions: Research from the Sounds of Home Project

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sciences humaines du Canada

Canada

# Outline

1. Project background
2. Survey
3. Interviews
4. Geovisualization



# 1. Project Background



# Music and Place

“

...the importance of locality, and local structures of feeling, in revealing the significance of musical life—and the connectedness of music to other aspects of local history, heritage and culture

(Bennett, 2015: 24)

# Local Music in Cultural Heritage Institutions

- Local music **artifacts**:

- tangible representations of the connection between music and space/place

- Local music **collectors**:

- help build and promote music communities

- Local music **culture**:

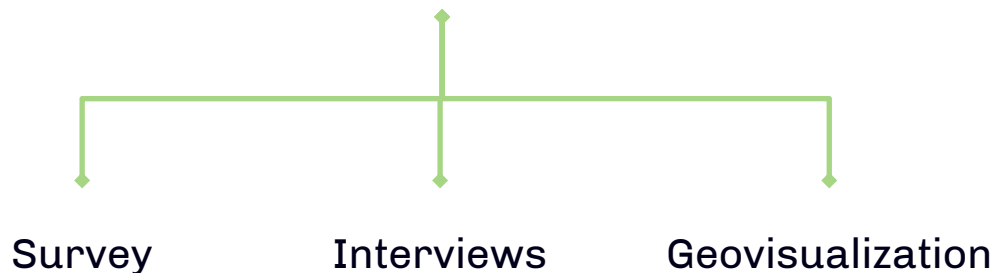
- connects people and places

# Research Model

## Theoretical Frameworks



## Methods



# Theoretical Frameworks

## Music Scenes

- Sociology of music/cultural production
- Considers various aspects of a music scene as related to broader cultural forms, including the network of people involved in creating and maintaining it

## Special Collections

- LIS/archival sciences
- Focus on the value collecting of rare/unique artifacts
- Examines the history of the transmission, use, and reception of texts

# Music Scenes

“ that cultural space in which a range of musical practices coexist, interacting with each other within a variety of processes of differentiation, and according to widely varying trajectories of change and cross-fertilization

(Straw, 1993: 373)





# Local Music Collectors

“ the network of people whose cooperative activity, organized via their joint knowledge of conventional means of doing things, produce(s) the kind of art works that art world is noted for

(Becker, 1982: x)

# Special Collections

“ The local history of music...has more than a regional interest, since definitive treatments of music...cannot be written until local studies provide the groundwork

(Epstein, 1967: 18)

“ ...we must not only help our collections speak to the needs of our communities, but to use our collections to help **build community**. Our access points and our technologies should allow members of the library community to converse with each other and in their own minds, with artifacts that house ideas, expressions, and emotions from all times and places

(Wasner, 2014: 333)

## 2. Survey

# Research Questions

1. What are the local music collection management practices in Canadian libraries?
2. Where may practices for collecting local music be improved?

# Method

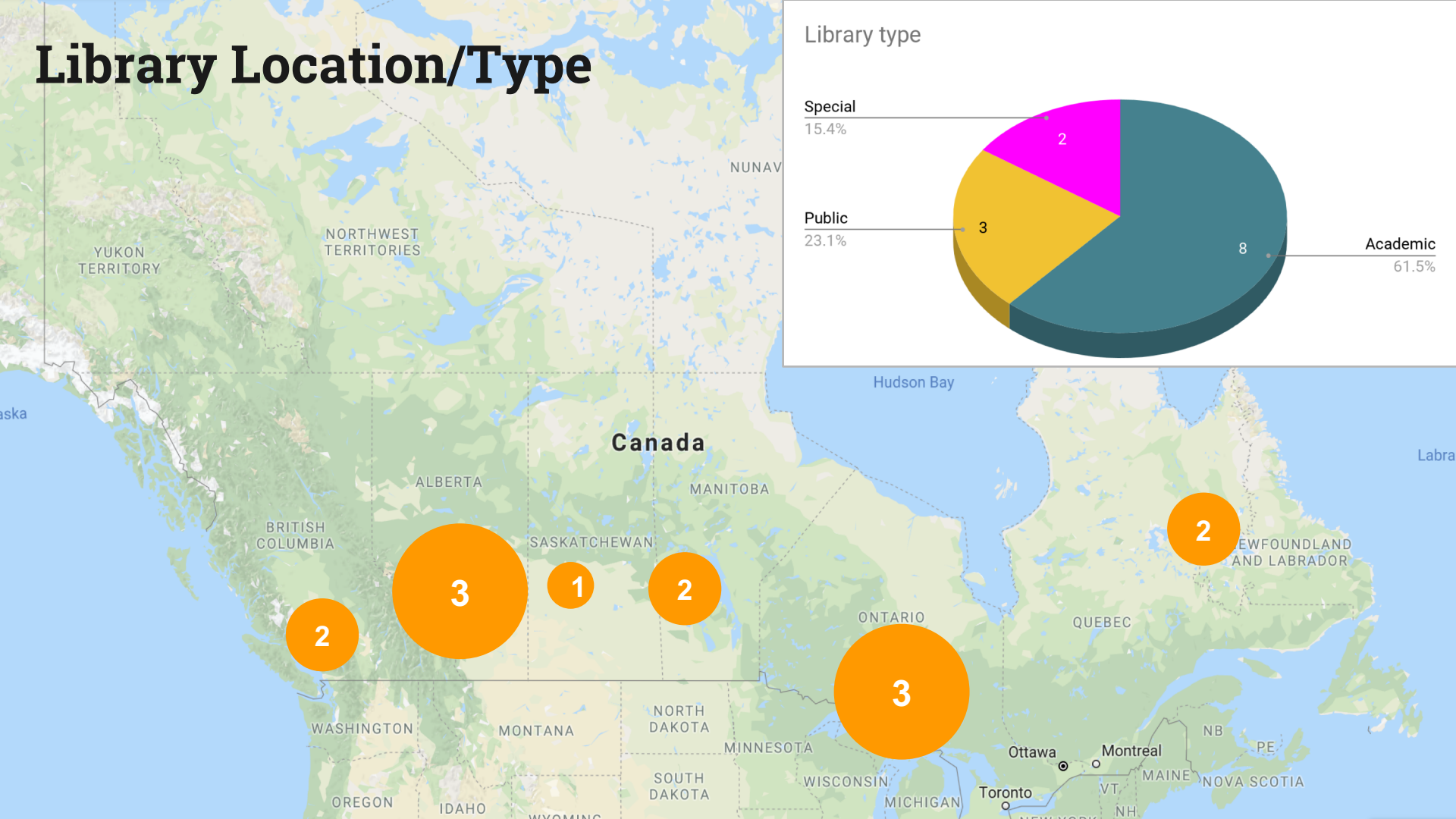
- Electronic questionnaire in English/French
- 20 questions (18 closed/4 open ended): demographics, collection scope, collection development, promotion, access, preservation
- Follow up questions: identifying collections, follow up interviews
- Participants from Canadian libraries (105 selected)
- Open for 3 weeks



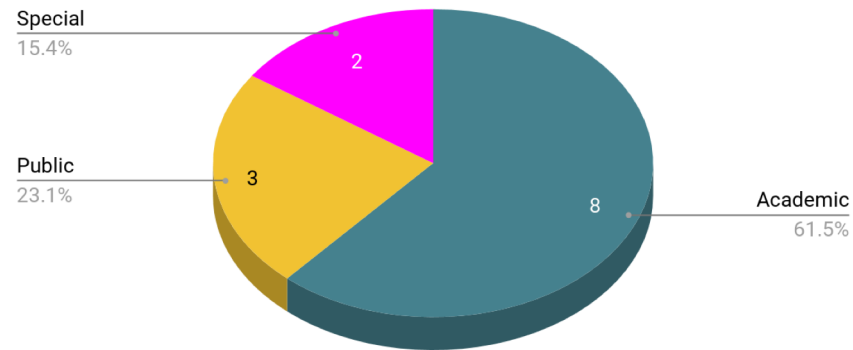
# Results Highlights

\*Dataset available at: <https://doi.org/10.7939/DVN/WAJ9UG>

# Library Location/Type



Library type



# Collection Scope

- Definition of “local” varies
- Collections contain many formats
- A/V materials (particularly sound recordings) are most predominant
- Majority of collections are growing

# Acquisitions

- Popular acquisition strategies include: conducting research, community engagement, collection development policies, and building community partnerships
- Popular acquisition methods include: working with music stores/vendors, donations, working with individual artists

# Access and Preservation

- All collections are cataloged to some extent
- Most collections use metadata to identify local music
- Primarily located in archives or special collections
- Physically accessible and more than half are also available online
- More than half of respondents are employing some kind of preservation method (physical, digital or both)

# Users

- Community members are the primary users of local music collections, followed by researchers as secondary users
- Primary collection use is research based (scholarly, historical, community, family)

# Outreach and Funding

- Most popular promotion activities are: community engagement activities, hosting events, and using online advertising or social media
- Funding is secured from a variety of sources within and beyond the institution

# Survey Conclusions

1. Local music work falls outside of traditional professional competencies
2. May intersect more with archival practices
3. Preservation and online access are facilitated primarily through digitization and online hosting
4. Potential challenges: donor relations, community outreach, working outside skillset



# 3. Interviews

# Purpose

1. Understand the values, lived experiences, and perceptions of local music collection managers in Canadian cultural heritage organizations
2. Gather diverse perspectives on local music collecting, collections, and their impact on communities

# Method

- Aiming for 30 participants (about half complete)
- Qualitative research interviews
- Semi-structured interview guide approach
- Questions focus is on value and significance of collecting local music from their perspective
- Photo documentation and site visits

# Initial Findings

1. Local music is collected in a wide variety of cultural heritage organizations and often considered rare or on the verge of being lost
2. Collectors consider local music to be underrepresented in academic conversations
3. Collection managers work closely with or as a part of the local music community
4. Challenges include: funding, infrastructure, time, interest

# 4. Geovisualization

# Visualizing Local Music Collections



# Background

- “Visual information seeking” introduced as a concept in 1993
- Since expanded into applications with library and music data
- Benefits:
  - Users can interact with data in a more engaging way
  - Understand musical data in a different way than textual representations
- Examples of recent geo visualizations of music data show ability to connect local music scenes and disparate geographic regions

# Musical Map: Cities of the World

Move the map, zoom, and click any city.  
For more information, see [insights.spotify.com](https://insights.spotify.com).

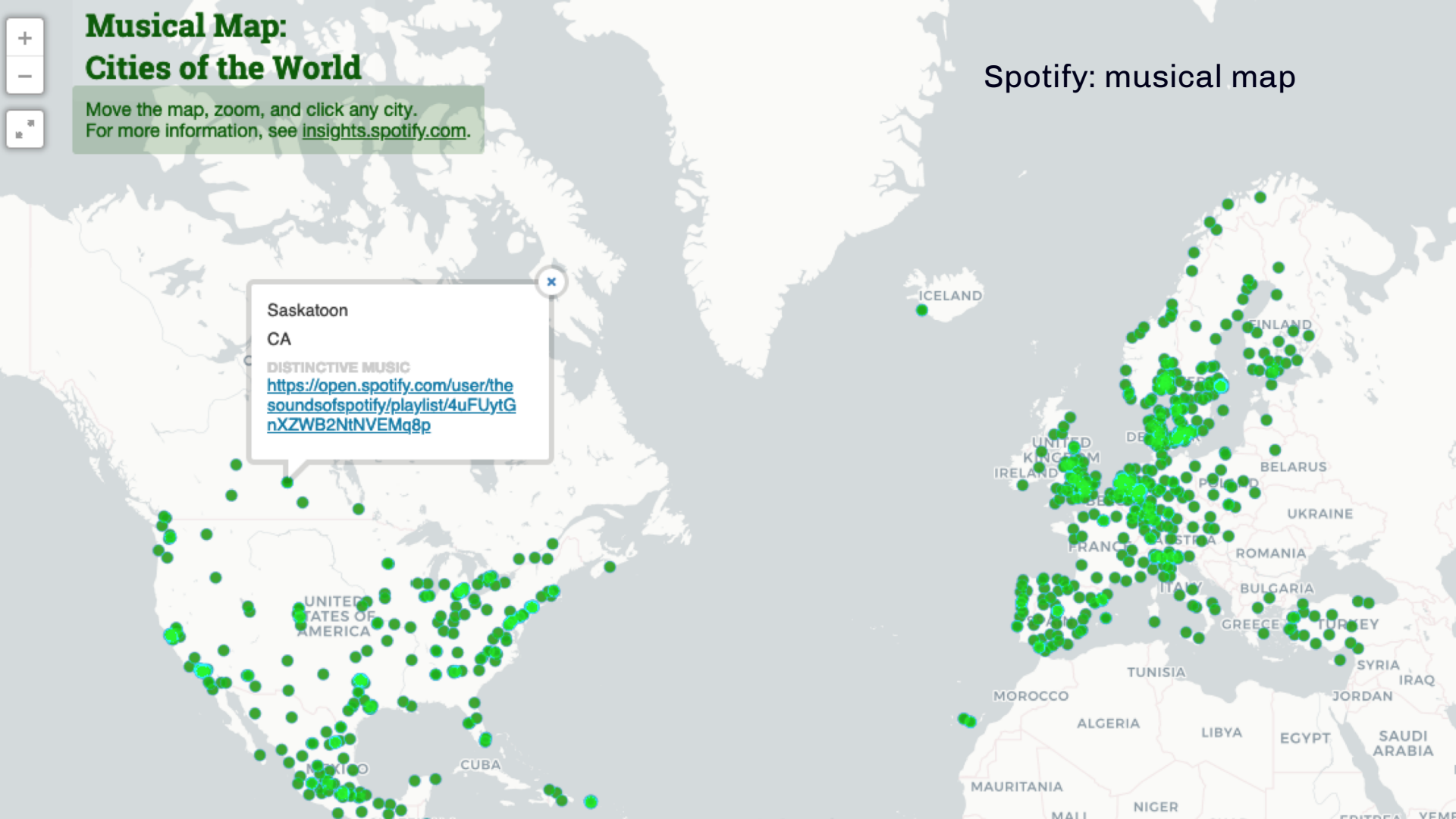
Saskatoon

CA

**DISTINCTIVE MUSIC**

<https://open.spotify.com/user/the-soundsofspotify/playlist/4uFUytGnXZWB2NtNVEMq8p>

Spotify: musical map





# #streetmusicmap

[HOME](#)[ARTISTS](#)[INSTAGRAM](#)[SPOTIFY PLAYLISTS](#)[MUSIC ALBUM](#)[SHORT DOCS](#)[ABOUT](#)

Artist

Country

City

StreetMusicMap



Street Music Map # 823

**HORSEHEAD BUCKET  
DRUMMER**  
SEATTLE, USA



Layer List

Layers



Orchestras



Bands



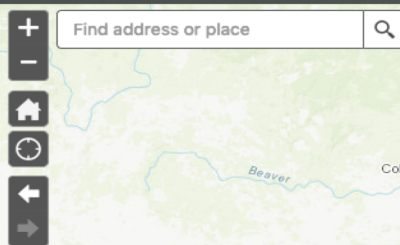
Choirs



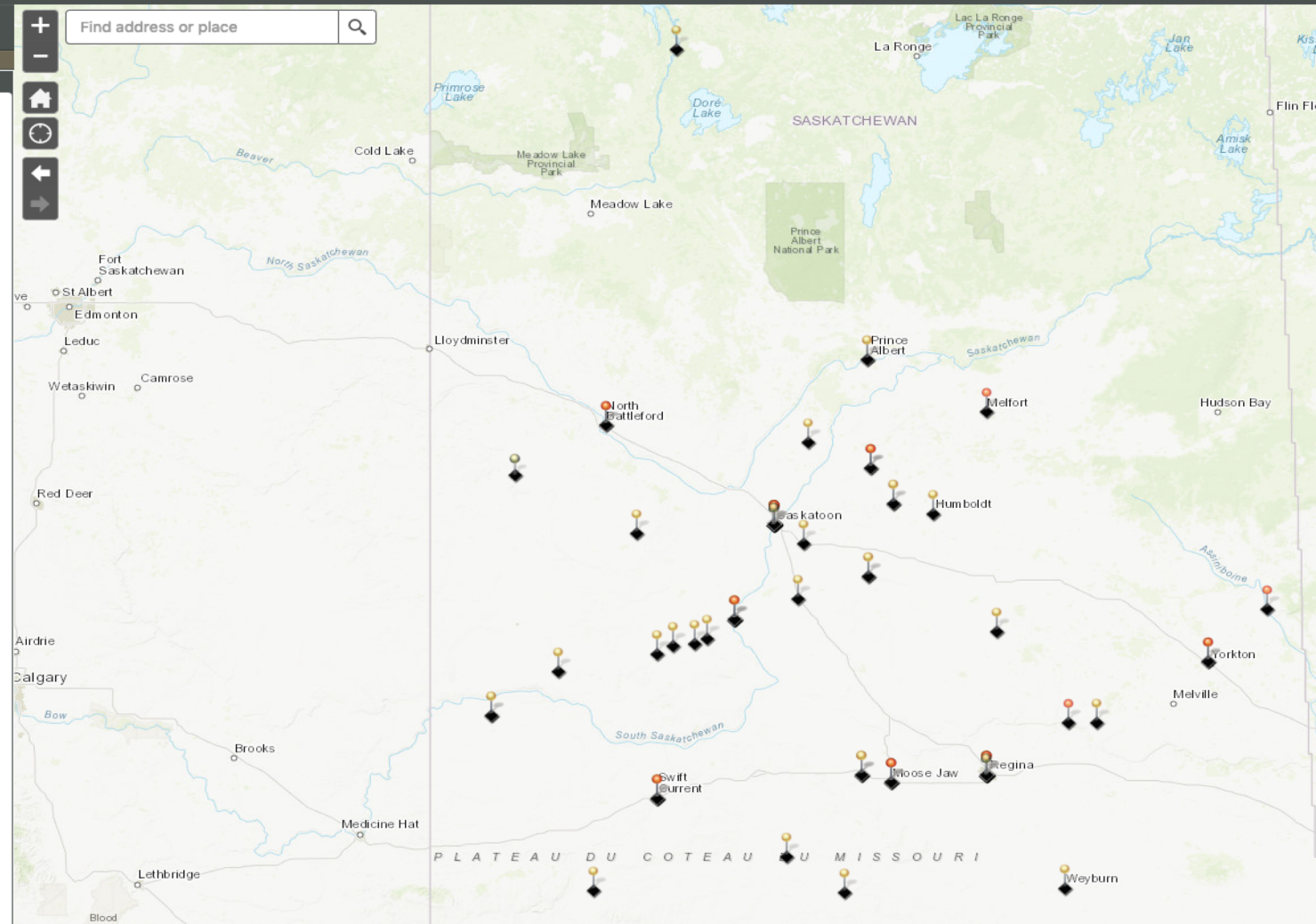
All ensembles - location points



All ensembles - location clusters



Find address or place



Saskatchewan  
Music Collection:  
Large ensembles in  
Saskatchewan



# Project Purpose

To create a visual tool to demonstrate the geographic location and scope of local music collections in Canada



# Developing a Local Music Dataset

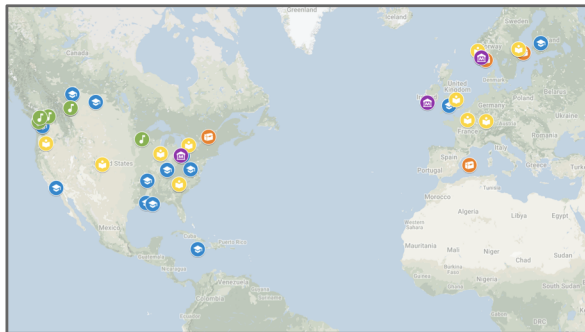
- Developing a dataset about local music collections in Canadian cultural heritage institutions
- Collections are found across the country
- Early experimentation with representation of locational data in Google maps. Platform is easy to use and adapt, but has limited features

# Research Questions

1. Where is local music collected? Where is it not collected?
2. What is the relationship between collection locations and other aspects of collection scope such as genre?

# Prototype Introduction

- Directory of local music collections held by cultural heritage institutions in Canada
- A way to explore collections and their characteristics, in relation to geographic location, and in relation to each other



# Process

- Create dataset that includes locational and collection information
- Select platform - ArcGIS Online
- Iterate on data structure to work with ArcGIS Online
- Publish data as hosted feature layer
- Create interactive filter for genre data
- Create and publish web application
- Configure interactive genre filter



# Prototype Demo

**Video:** <https://usask.cloud.panopto.eu/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=0739cfb8-f0fa-4222-a206-a9f101593ff8>

# Limitations and Challenges

- Structuring data and building the web app while still developing skills
- Conceptualizing the final product while still developing skills
- Small dataset limits the utility of certain visualizations and types of analysis
- Representing collections that move, or that are held in multiple locations

# Next Steps

- Continue to build dataset and add collection locations
- Find a way to explore and represent the scope of “local” music
- Gather feedback on prototype and revise



**Thanks for listening!**

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<https://research-groups.usask.ca/soundsofhome/>